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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 000151

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: NCP WOULD LIKE TO SEE DEEPER ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW
USG ADMINISTRATION

REF: A. KHARTOUM 140
[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 139

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4(b) a
nd (d)

1.(C) Summary. In meetings with Senior Representative for Sudan Shortley and CDA Fernandez February 3-4, NCP officials said that the GoS was ready to engage constructively with the Obama Administration and look for ways to advance the US-Sudan relationship through dialogue coupled with tangible results. They stated the need for confidence between the two nations to be rebuilt so that progress could be made and explained that intense US pressure on the GoS regime was not appreciated, nor always effective. NCP officials also recommended that Sudan and the US work together on solving the big issues in Darfur and on the CPA, rather than fixating on details and procedure. USG officials urged the GoS to take immediate steps to show its genuine interest in making progress by addressing the problems in Muhajeriya and participating in talks with AU-UN Chief Mediator Bassole and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in Doha on February 9, as well as other measures. End Summary.

A CALL TO MOVE PAST THE MUTUAL DISTRUST

12. (C) Senior Representative for Sudan Tim Shortley and CDA Fernandez met with senior National Congress Party (NCP) strategists Yahia Bebiker and Sayeed Al-Khatib separately on February 3 and 4 in Khartoum. Bebiker stated that he has always been an advocate of the U.S. and Sudan "working together," and referred to the 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) as a example of the success of such an approach. "It is important for our nations to constructively engage one another," especially in the next few months, said Bebiker. "We have an important year ahead of us both on Darfur and CPA implementation," he continued. Our nations have had a successful relationship in the past and we can do it again, he said. Shortley agreed with Bebiker that the CPA was the height of the U.S.-Sudan relationship and asked Bebiker how he thought the two nations could again reach that point, particularly with so many critical and urgent events like Sudanese national elections, border demarcation, and the result of the Abyei arbitration expected soon. Both the U.S. and Sudan "complain about an erosion of confidence; there is a mutual distrust between us," said Bebiker. The key to any success is breaking down this mistrust and building confidence between us, he continued. The NCP official explained that inaccurate statements made by the media (both Sudanese and Western) often times exacerbate the aura of mistrust between the two nations. As we gradually build confidence, we can start to discuss options for issues like Abyei and the Sudanese

national elections, suggested Bebiker. It is key, however, that your effort here be "even-handed, unbiased, and not targeted against a particular side," warned Bebiker.

RESPECT US AND THE IDEA OF UNITY, SAYS NCP OFFICIAL

13. (C) Bebiker told Shortley that top officials from the NCP and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) jointly discussed recently the unity of the nation. "We were critical of ourselves; the criticism was that we have not been committed enough to unity (post-2011)," said Bebiker. "This applies to the international community, including the signatories of the CPA as guarantors." The international community, and in particular the US, has given the wrong impression that there has already been a "de facto separation" and that there is already "independence of the government in the South." This is partly due to inertia created by CPA, but the U.S. also does not want to appear "soft" towards the NCP, opined Bebiker. This limits the U.S.' ability to do a lot on the CPA, particularly regarding assistance in the formation and training of joint integrated units (JIUs), development, and the promotion of unity in Sudan post-2011, claimed the NCP official. CDA Fernandez pushed back on Bebiker's point regarding the JIUs - "we have been trying" to assist with the JIUs for years, but the Sudanese Ministry of Defense, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Joint Defense Board (JDB) have not even given us a chance to try to assist. CDA also told Bebiker that the U.S. Embassy in Sudan has a Defense Liaison Officer, but that he has no real access to the Ministry of Defense or the SAF.

14. (C) Bebiker asked that if the new US administration is

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willing to reach out to Iran and Syria, then why not Sudan? "We are in a vicious cycle," right now, said Bebiker. "We agreed on some steps to improve the bilateral relationship with Special Envoy Williamson; we can agree to renew those steps," suggested Bebiker. The best way to do this, he explained, is to have a number of USG and Sudanese officials sit down and freely discuss and identify certain steps that would move the US-Sudan bilateral relationship in a more positive direction. This can only come about through "dialogue; we can agree on issues and move forward," posited Bebiker. Shortley responded that this might be a potential second or third step, but that confidence between the two nations must be rebuilt first. He suggested the only way to do that was for Sudan to take immediate positive steps on issues like Darfur (and in the immediate future - Muhajiriya) and CPA implementation. CDA told Bebiker that the NCP can do a lot to prepare the ground in a positive way with the new US administration before a formal dialogue begins. Bebiker responded that actions should be taken by both partners (the US and Sudan) to show goodwill and rebuild trust. "People here are dignified, they want to be respected," said Bebiker. The U.S. thinks that it knows the issues of Sudan better than the Sudanese themselves; you assume the Government of Sudan doesn't know its own issues in the South or in Darfur, nor how to solve them, he claimed. This puts a "bar between us." But, said Bebiker, if you lend us a "helping hand," as you did with the CPA and the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), this would be more effective. All of this gets back to the issue of "intentions, respect, and wrong assumptions," said Bebiker. The US takes a "paternalistic" and arrogant approach towards Sudan. "I am just reflecting the sentiment that many people here in Sudan have about the US," he explained.

A WAY FORWARD ON DARFUR

15. (C) Polchief asked Bebiker what conditions would be required for a cease-fire in Darfur to hold. Babiker replied that in technical terms it would require an effective monitoring team, and in principal it would require that all parties (the GoS and the rebels) be committed to it. Maximum pressure cannot be put on one party alone or that party won't

commit to the agreement, warned Bebiaker. In terms of a
monitoring team, Bebiaker commented that the small, US-led
Verification and Monitoring Team (VMT) was extremely
successful in monitoring the 2002 Machakos Protocol which
called for a cessation of hostilities between the north and
the south. He also commented that the success of the
Protocol was derived from the good faith and the two
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